

Over the past 90 years, the Girl Scouts have: sold war bonds during World War One; led community relief efforts during the Great Depression; helped tackle illiteracy with then First Lady, Barbara Bush; and most recently, Girl Scouts donated a personal gift of one dollar each to help support the children of Afghanistan—no small amount with a membership of nearly 4 million girls.

Within the Senior Girl Scouts division, young women are challenged to serve their community through Gold Award projects. Scouts strive for two years to earn a series of required badges, pins and patches. A scout must then plan and execute a year-long Gold Award project under the guidance of a certified volunteer. The Gold Award is the Girl Scouts highest award, with less than 4,000 scouts receiving the award each year.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support their local Girl Scout chapter and participate in at least one Gold Award ceremony in the next year in order to fully appreciate the hard work and enormous effort each Girl Scout must exert to achieve her goal.

CENTRAL AMERICAN SECURITY
ACT (CASA)

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Central American Security Act (CASA). This legislation has strong bi-partisan support, and would give Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans the same opportunity to adjust their immigration status that Congress extended to Nicaraguans and Cubans in 1997.

In 1997, Congress passed the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) which offered drastically different immigration relief for Nicaraguans and Cubans than it did for Salvadorans and Guatemalans, despite similar political situations in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. Immigrants arriving here from these countries were all fleeing similar circumstances. As a result of this disparity in treatment, there are many undocumented Central Americans in the United States today who are hard-working, taxpaying, long-term residents with no way to regularize their immigration status. Our bill would resolve the contradiction.

While there are strong equity and fairness arguments to provide "parity" to Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans, we are equally interested in the key U.S. foreign policy and national security interests in Central America that are served by the proposal.

After suffering through a string of brutal civil wars, these countries now have moderate, democratically-elected governments. They have made great progress in respecting human rights and the rule of law. These are pro-American, multi-party democracies where political violence has been largely eliminated. Yet, these emerging democracies remain fragile, ravaged by natural disasters and beset by economic hardship. We must do what we can to help and nurture them.

Hard-working Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans in the United States send billions of dollars home to their families every

year. These funds strengthen democratic institutions and provide for basic human needs. They amount to significantly more than we could ever hope to provide in foreign aid. Cutting off these remittances would renew economic and political instability in the region, undermine efforts to combat terrorism and drug trafficking, and generate massive new migration to the United States.

According to the INS, as many as 8 million undocumented immigrants live in the U.S. today. This is a situation profoundly affecting our national security, and we should make every effort to change it for the better. While we do not have the resources to find and identify all of the undocumented aliens in our country, we must give them some incentive to come forward and identify themselves. CASA would provide that incentive to bring some of these aliens out of the shadows and encourage them to register with the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, it is in our best interest to enhance domestic security efforts and to ensure the economic and political stability of Central America. Therefore, I urge all of my colleagues to support this fair and equitable legislation.

SOCIAL SECURITY PRIVATIZATION

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, there has been a considerable amount of debate on how to reform our Social Security System and make it solvent. There is no question that we need to reform Social Security. The Social Security Trustees estimate cash flow deficits in the system starting in 2016 with a bankruptcy date of 2038. It is also estimated that the system will only be able to pay 73 percent of promised benefits. There are many reasons contributing to this depletion, such as increase life expectancies and lagging birth rates. However, the crux of the issue is how we reform Social Security without raising payroll taxes, cutting benefits or allowing the government to invest in stock markets.

In May 2001, President Bush established a 16-Member Commission on Social Security to make recommendations on how to reform Social Security. As you know, the Commission issued a final report last December that proposed three alternative models for Social Security reform that focuses on personal accounts as a central component.

In two of the proposed alternative models, the Commission claims that low income workers and Minorities will fare better if they invest part of their Social Security taxes in stocks and bonds. The rationale is that Minority groups such as African-Americans are heavily dependent on Social Security benefits during retirement and often have little or no pension savings or other sources of income. Specifically the two alternative models call for the following:

Alternative Model 2: Workers can voluntarily redirect 4 percent of their payroll taxes up to \$1000 annually to a personal account (the maximum contribution is indexed annually to wage growth). No additional contribution from the worker would be required.

Alternative Model 3: Personal Accounts are created by a match of part of the payroll tax—2.5 percent up to \$1000 annually (indexed annually for wage growth)—for any worker who contributes an additional 1 percent of wages subject to Social Security payroll taxes.

It is unfortunate that the Commission failed to realize that you cannot help low income workers and Minorities based on a plan that cuts benefits up to 46 percent. These proposals would subject everyone to this benefit cut, not just workers who choose to have an individual account. Finally, Social Security privatization would expose individual workers and their families to much greater financial risk. Under privatization, Social Security benefits would no longer be determined primarily by a worker's earnings and the payroll tax contributions he or she made over their career. Rather, benefit levels would be determined by the volatile stock market.

While it is true that Social Security faces a long-term challenge, diverting revenue from Social Security into private accounts will seriously undermine our commitment to the retirement security of American seniors.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL
CHRISTOPHER CHANDLER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 20, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome home an outstanding Marine and true American hero. Marine Cpl. Christopher Chandler recently returned home from protecting and fighting for our country in Afghanistan. As a young marine, Christopher traveled far from American soil to ensure that the attacks of September 11th on this country would not go unanswered. He has recently returned home to Colorado and I would like tell his story before this body of Congress and this nation.

Corporal Christopher Chandler is a member of the 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Marine Division of the 15th Marine Expeditionary unit. He was stationed at the Kandahar International Airport in Afghanistan to ensure peace reigned in the region. While on patrol on December 16th, he was injured in an enemy blast, resulting in the loss of his left foot and injury to his hand. Following initial treatment, he was moved to Walter Reed Army Medical Center where he recently finished the initial healing process and began rehabilitation. For wounds sustained in combat, Christopher Chandler was awarded the Purple Heart medal.

As his rehabilitation continues, Christopher thrives on the tenacity he demonstrated in his endeavor to become a United States Marine. He has refused to let his injury harm his spirit and has recovered remarkably strong. Believe it or not, Christopher now desires to return to active service. He is a remarkable young man, and if he continues to prod ahead through his life with the diligence and commitment to success he has achieved thus far, there is no limit to his future potential.

Mr. Speaker, I am truly honored today to recognize Corporal Christopher Chandler before this body of Congress and this nation. His selfless sacrifice to his country serves as a